

Contributions

TAFFY versus TRUTH

R. R. TEETER

There is a strange mixture being dealt out daily to a hungry people. The hungering and thirsting is common to all people, but the same appetite, the same thirst is not common to all, and suffice it to say that the food and drink yearned for are not always that which the individual needs.

There are those who are appointed to wait upon the needs of the people, but some times instead of satisfying their needs they try to satisfy their *desires*, and they feed "taffy" instead of truth. Taffy well made is indeed a delight to the taste, and who, that has enjoyed it fresh from the sugar camp in early spring in years gone by, does not involuntarily smack his lips in remembrance of the luxury? But on the other hand, who does not remember the direful results of an over indulgence of the delicacy?

There are many people who desire to be fed continually upon "taffy," and there are many teachers who are willing to furnish the feed.

In Christ's time there was many a Pharisee who would have received with open mouth any "taffy" that might fall from the Master's hand, but to be fed upon the truth that fell from His lips was disagreeable to them.

It would seem that mature Christians would have a sincere desire to know the truth, but my experience has taught me that many church members prefer "taffy" to truth, and I have been told by people who wished to advise, that if I would get along well with certain ones I must feed them a little "taffy." I say, No! Christ said, "The truth shall make you free." And telling the truth made enemies to Christ. So will it often make enemies to us and yet there is no alternative. People may be held together for a while by receiving a generous portion of "taffy" every Sunday, but sooner or later there is bound to be an explosion.

I well remember a certain congregation which seems to have been fed upon "taffy" for a few years and each member was made to feel that he was a "good fellow." The pastor confessed to a brother minister that he must leave, because, as he said, everything is blown up like a soap bubble and he wanted to get away before it burst. The bubble has burst and sad has been the result.

When people are taught that the ordinances of God's house are among the non-essentials of Christianity, is not this a substitution of "taffy" for truth? One of the most prominent theologians of the Presbyterian church in America recently devoted a sermon to explaining away Christ's radical terms of discipleship and

to the justification of a costly esthetic style of living on the part of those whom God has blest with wealth. Was that "taffy" or truth? I believe satan likes "taffy." I also believe he likes to see people fed upon "taffy." But truth is a great enemy to satan, bound, in time, to overthrow his kingdom.

Then brethren, let us not feed "taffy" but truth directly from God.

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METHOD IN THE EARLY CHURCH

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I do not only believe in God's law concerning sin but in his *method of dealing with it*. I cannot separate the method of God from his plan. If one is divine the other must be also. We get both from the same source, the inspired Word. God has told us not only to worship, but *how* to worship; not only to pray, but *how* to pray; not only to sing, but *how* to sing; not only to preach and govern the church, but *what* to preach, and *how* to govern the church. The *how* in religion is completely ignored by the thousands. One human method fails only to be tried by another more human. In fact some methods employed by not a few border on the inhuman.

Some books we have been asked to read contain methods, but they are not God's. Not a semblance do we find in the book containing His plans. That is why I reject them. I fear the harvest which must come from this trash. In the ministerial meeting recently held three of our ministers openly advocated the utility of the mourner's bench in obtaining forgiveness of sins. I don't know how many more held to this same fallacy but were afraid to speak their convictions. Is it any wonder our Conservative brethren are so successful in breaking down our influence in communities? What more do they want than these fanciful, visionary schemes of some of our leaders to prevent good, sensible men from uniting with us? Brethren, it is not falsehoods any longer that they are hurting us with, "it's the cold truth." And if there are not many more who will be clamoring for the same *lack of method* soon it will be because they will refuse to believe what their teachers have recommended them to read.

I am sorry to have to write these words. I don't know how my brother will think they "look in our church organ." But the Dunkard faith that has held up its head in every debate for the last half century and sustained successfully the onslaughts of all opposition, can not be supplanted by these human methods and doctrines without my protest. My sympathy and well wishes count for but very little, but I have commendation for none but those who preach Brethren doctrine. If you are

unable to find it read the proceedings of the Dayton convention, 1883, and it will tell you where to look for it.

God has a method of propagating his truth. He could not afford to risk the spread of the gospel, upon which so much has depended and is depending, to short-sighted man. The initial power is not only in the word "go" of the commission, but in the promise, "Lo I am with you." What will the "go" amount to without the fulfilling of the promise? But that promise, like every other promise of God, is to be realized only by fulfilling certain conditions. Unscriptural methods will defeat the purpose of God if you "go" everywhere and every week.

But I learn the meaning of the word "go" from the *how*—how the apostles used it. From whence do you get your meaning, my brother? From the Christian Alliance? The Moravians? The missionary boards? These parties can not interpret the commission for me. They won't teach conversion the way Peter taught it on Pentecost. They won't open the Bible—God's book—and read the plain answer to the question, "What must we do?" to inquiring sinners. They have a new way, all their own, the "shouting happy" way. So I prefer to learn at the apostles' feet.

It is very clear to me that the meaning of the word "go" to the apostles was not what some teach. How do I know? Why, by the way they went. Read the Acts of the Apostles. It's the plainest, simplest, *most authentic* missionary manual on the face of the earth. Real method. Inspired of God. Not theory. One phase of the commission as given by Luke was that the carrying out of the commission was from a certain place. They were to begin at Jerusalem. From this centre of activity the work was to spread. Jerusalem became a stronghold of the faith. Many of the priests became obedient. When the dissension occurred over circumcision, "the brethren appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question." This was nearly twenty years after the great ingathering, and the apostles were still in Jerusalem. That is why I say the word *go* to them meant more than rushing about thru the world. What could they have been doing but making strong their partially subdued field? Take up a map and see how much territory was covered the first forty years of their history. What they did they did well. Until we prove ourselves apostolic in this first characteristic I can not join in other ventures. Read how Paul tarried at many different places until he could make strong his work. Why go so many times to Antioch and preach there when the Lord told him to "go for the blood of the heathen was upon his gar-